

## MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

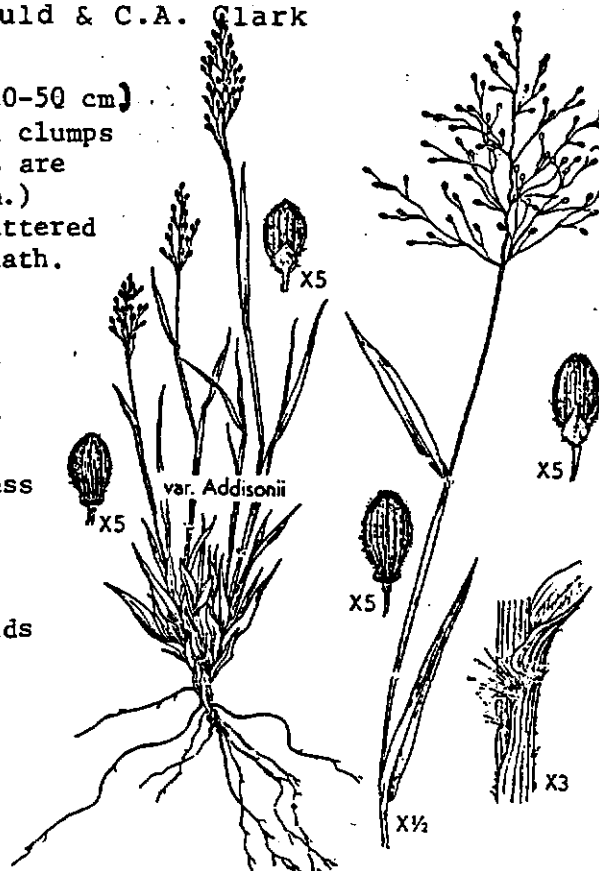
### COMMONS'S PANIC-GRASS

Dichanthelium commonsianum (Nash) Gould & C.A. Clark  
DESCRIPTION

Commons's Panic-grass is a short 8-20 inch (20-50 cm) tufted, perennial grass that is found in small clumps of several flowering stems. Erect leaf blades are 1½-3½ inches (4-9 cm.) long and ¼ inch (3-7 mm.) wide. The blades are smooth or have a few scattered hairs above and smooth to softly hairy underneath. Stems and sheaths (elongate leaf bases which envelop the stem) are clothed with hairs less than ¼ inch long. Relatively open and austere looking panicles (inflorescences with stalked flowers) are produced in late spring and early summer. The panicles have stiffly spreading branches with a few stalked spikelets (each less than an inch (1.7-2 mm.) long).

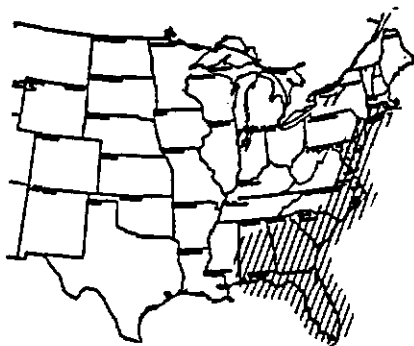
### HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Commons's Panic-grass grows in dry, sandy fields and barrens on the coastal plain. It is also found in dry Pitch Pine/Oak woods, colonizing openings and disturbed soil where there is little or no leaf litter. Associated species include Eragrostis spectabilis (Tumble Grass), Carex pensylvanica (Pennsylvania Sedge), Andropogon scoparius (Little Bluestem), and Pinus rigida (Pitch Pine).

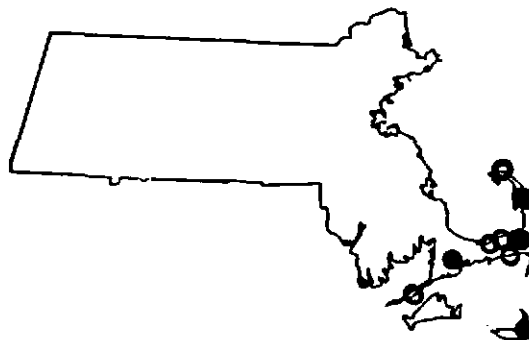


Gleason, H.A. The New Britton and Brown  
Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S.  
and Adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden,  
1931.

(continued overleaf)



Distribution of Commons's Panic-grass



● Verified since 1978  
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

## COMMONS'S PANIC-GRASS (continued)

### RANGE

This grass ranges from southeastern Massachusetts, south along the coastal plain to Florida and west to Alabama. Disjunct populations also occur in northwest Indiana and central New York.

### POPULATION STATUS

In Massachusetts, Common's Panic-grass is considered a species of "Special Concern". Currently (1978 to present), 8 occurrences have been recorded; historically, 9 other occurrences have been reported. The causes of rarity include loss of habitat due to residential and commercial development, forest succession, and the occurrence of Common's Panic-grass at the extreme northern edge of its range.